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STRONG HUBS FOR AFGHAN HOPE AND RESILIENCE PROGRAM (SHAHAR)

NOVEMBER 2014 – NOVEMBER 2017

\$38 MILLION

OVERVIEW

The USAID Strong Hubs for Afghan Hope and Resilience project (SHAHAR) is supporting the Afghan government-led initiative to create well-governed and fiscally-sustainable municipalities that meet the needs of the rapidly growing urban population. The project partners with 20 municipalities, four of which serve as regional economic hubs. The project has full-time, embedded staff in 10 of these municipalities, namely: Kandahar, Lashkar Gah, Shibirghan, Mazar-e-Sharif, Aybak, Pule Khumri, Puli Alam, Ghazni, Chaharikar and Mihterlam. The regions are selected jointly with the Independent Directorate

of Local Governance and the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities (DMM).

SHAHAR consists of three main components: (1) assisting the DMM to strengthen municipal governance and increase its human and institutional capacity; (2) helping municipal institutions to become more resilient, transparent, and self-sustaining, and to effectively meet the needs of citizens; (3) supporting Municipal Advisory Boards to function as forums for citizens to collectively advocate for their priorities.

ACTIVITIES

- Develop a Municipal Governance Capacity Index Tool and conduct rapid capacity gap assessments
- Prepare Capacity Building Plans for municipal officials at municipal, departmental and individual staff levels
- Assist municipalities in systematic registration of properties and businesses
- Review and update municipal standard operating procedures by DMM
- Develop revenue generation action plans
- Implement street address systems in municipalities
- Implement small infrastructure and service delivery projects for 16 small- and medium-sized municipalities
- Develop and implement solid waste management plans for all 20 municipalities

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completed baseline and midline Municipal Governance Capacity Index Assessments in all 20 municipalities
- Developed capacity building plans for all 20 municipalities and Municipal Advisory Boards
- Conducted base-line citizen perception surveys in 20 municipalities to measure satisfaction with municipal services
- Established an integrated financial management system working group
- Carried out citizen service centers assessments in all 20 municipalities, and established citizen service centers in 10 municipalities.
- Deployed embedded advisors to DMM and all 20 municipalities
- Conducted a capacity gap assessment for 19 existing Municipal Advisory Boards (MABS) and assisted in the re-establishment of MABs in 20 municipalities
- Updated and improved local economic development plans in all 20 municipalities
- Assisted municipalities to identify and implement PPP projects
- Assisted 33 municipalities in budget preparation, conducting budget hearings and processing budgets through the official approval process
- Conducted a national media campaign for clean and green cities
- Prepared and implemented action strategies aimed at involving women and youth in municipal affairs

Date: November 2016
E-mail: kblaidocinformation@usaid.gov
Web: <http://www.usaid.gov/afghanistan>